



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Patent and Trademark Office**

Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
Washington, D.C. 20231

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
09/208,963	12/10/98	LIU	J 97-2739

IM22/0119

CHARLES Q BUCKWALTER
ALUMINUM COMPANY OF AMERICA
ALCOA TECHNICAL CENTER
100 TECHNICAL DRIVE
ALCOA CENTER PA 15069-0001

EXAMINER

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1742

DATE MAILED: 01/19/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/208,963

Applicant(s)

LIU ET AL.

Examiner

Harry D Wilkins, III

Art Unit

1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 November 2000.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-40 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-40 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. & 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 20) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-40 are pending. New claims 21-40 have been entered. Claims 1 and 11-16 have been amended.
2. The rejection under 35 USC 112 has been withdrawn in view of the amendment filed on 6 November 2000.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

4. Claims 1-20 and 23-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Karabin et al (5,863,359).

This is merely a clarification of the rejection grounds for claims 1-20 as stated in the previous office action.

Karabin et al anticipate the claimed aluminum alloy composition. Karabin et al's alloy consists of 3.6 to 4.0 wt% copper, 1.0 to 1.6 wt% magnesium, 0.3 to 0.7 wt% manganese, 0.05 to 0.25 wt% zirconium, and the balance aluminum and inevitable impurities. The alloy is restricted to less than 0.05 wt% iron and less than 0.03 wt% silicon. The alloy is subjected to a heat treatment in a temperature range of 900-935°F, which includes values below its T_{max} . The alloy maintains the yield strength of 2324-T39, actually increasing it slightly. The alloy has properties among which ΔK at a

fatigue crack growth rate of 10 μ -inch/cycle increases above the baseline 2324-T39 alloy by more than 30% (see Table 1). Regarding the value of Cu_{target} , the composition of Karabin et al falls within the claimed composition, therefore it is inherent that it would satisfy the Cu_{target} .

With respect to the inclusion of zirconium in the alloy, it is accepted that the term "comprising" does not exclude the presence of other ingredients. See *Ex parte Muench*, 79 USPQ 92 (PTO Bd. App. 1948).

Regarding claim 2, Karabin et al teach (see abstract) an alloy composition that is within the limitations of W, X, Y, and Z on figure 5.

Regarding claim 3, Karabin et al teach (see abstract) composition ranges that overlap the instant claims, therefore it is inherent that the values of Cu_{target} and Mg_{target} are satisfied.

Regarding claims 4-8, Karabin et al teach (see col 8, table 1) a composition that increases ΔK at a fatigue crack growth rate of 10 m-inch/cycle above the baseline 2324-T39 alloy by more than 30%.

Regarding claims 9-10 and 17-18, Karabin et al's composition (see abstract) is used for parts of a lower wing on an aircraft.

Regarding claims 11-16, Karabin et al teach (see abstract and col 8, table 1) a composition of claim 2, that increases ΔK at a fatigue crack growth rate of 10 m-inch/cycle above the baseline 2324-T39 alloy by more than 30%.

Regarding claims 19 and 20, it is inherent in the composition of Karabin et al that if the silicon were reduced further in the disclosed amount that the T_{max} would show an increase of 1-5°F.

Regarding claims 25, 28, 31, 34, 37 and 40, in table 1 Karabin et al show (see col 8, table 1) that ΔK improves by 4.0 ksi/in² where $R=0.1$ and at a fatigue growth rate of 10 μ -inch/cycle.

Regarding claims 23, 26, 29, 32, 35 and 38, in table 1 Karabin et al show (see col 8, table 1) that K_{Ic} for the alloy improves by 6 ksi/in² over the 2324-T39 alloy.

Regarding claims 24, 27, 30, 33, 36 and 39, with respect to the property of increased K_{app} over the 2324-T39 alloy, the composition taught by Karabin et al overlaps the composition and teaches a similar method of production as recited in the claims, therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would have expected that the products taught by the reference would inherently have the same K_{app} as claimed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 21-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Karabin et al.

Karabin et al teach a composition that overlaps the instant claims, however there is no mention of what type of temper the alloy exists in. However, it is stated (see col 1,

line 64 to col 2 line 5) that aluminum alloys that are similar to 2024 or 2324 are normally tempered using T3-type tempers, typically T351 or T39. Therefore, it would have been obvious to temper the alloy of Karabin et al using the T351 or T39 methods because it is merely a modified 2324 aluminum alloy.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed 6 November 2000 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

8. In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., recrystallization) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Colvin et al (5,213,639) teach a similar alloy composition and heat treatment method to the instant claims.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Harry D Wilkins, III whose telephone number is 703-305-9927. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy V King can be reached on 703-308-1146. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3599 for regular communications and 703-305-3599 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.

Harry D Wilkins, III
Examiner
Art Unit 1742

hdw
January 17, 2001

ROY KING 
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700